

Course Outline

COURSE: LAWS 3602B – International Human Rights

TERM: Fall 2024

PREREQUISITES: Prerequisite(s): (0.5 credit from [LAWS 2105](#), [LAWS 2502](#), [LAWS 2601](#) or [HUMR 2001](#)) and 0.5 credit in LAWS at the 2000 level or [PAPM 1001](#) and [PSCI 2003](#).

CLASS: Day & Time: Fridays: 8:35 -11:25 am
 Room: Please check Carleton Central for current Class Schedule
 This is an in- person class; regular attendance is required

INSTRUCTOR: Doris Buss

CONTACT: Office:
 Office Hrs: Fridays 12:40-1:40 pm OR BY appointment. *By Zoom*
 Telephone: 613 520-2600 (ext. 8011)
 Email: Doris.buss@carleton.ca

A. CALENDAR COURSE DESCRIPTION

The developing international law relating to the protection of human rights. General concepts, rules and institutions. Specific issues include self-determination, aboriginal rights, the refugee problem, and torture. The inherent problems and overall potential of international law.

B. COURSE DESCRIPTION

“There is a hue and cry for human rights, they said, for all people, and the Indigenous people said: What of the rights of the natural world? Where is the seat for the buffalo or the eagle?”

Who is representing them at this forum? Who is speaking for the water of the earth? Who is speaking for the trees and the forests? Who is speaking for the fish—for the whales, for the beavers, for our children?"

CHIEF OREN LYONS JR., Faithkeeper of the Onondaga tribe of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Nation, quoted in Boyd 2017, xxi

Since the 1940s, international human rights law has grown and expanded. We can see this in the:

- types of human rights abuses that are now recognized as such and the range of legal instruments to address those abuses;
- numbers of actors (people, institutions, organizations) who advocate for human rights;
- use of human rights language and concepts to think about and name injustice;
- emergence of human rights cultures: the films, documentaries, books and literature about/on human rights, and also cultures *of* human rights: the practices, expectations, language, norms used in spaces where human rights are spoken or contested.

This class starts with a puzzle: why, despite this evolution of international human rights, has the recognition of the human rights dimensions of environmental harm been so slow to develop. This course is an introduction to the international law, treaties and some of the key actors involved in international human rights law viewed through the lens of this puzzle. What are the underlying structures, approaches, histories of international human rights law that make it less amenable to addressing catastrophic environmental damage, like climate change? *This is NOT a course on international environmental law.* It is focused on the actors, institutions and legal agreements that form the foundation of international human rights, but examined in terms of the surprising absence of environmental harm.

Course objectives:

By the end of the course, it is expected that students will:

1. demonstrate a basic familiarity with the key structures and institutions of the United Nations-based human rights machinery and be able to locate key developments in human rights in an area of their choosing;

This objective will be demonstrated through the 'human rights machinery assignment', final quiz, group project.

2. Identify and consider the potential and limits international human rights language, concepts, and institutions as ways to make claims to social justice. This will be demonstrated through quiz, group project and final, individual essay.

3. Identify and provide a preliminary assessment of some of the human rights implications of environmental harm in a given subject area. This will be demonstrated through group project and final, individual essay.

This course requires students to regularly attend class. We will work together in the classroom through key concepts and important developments on human rights. Students will be required to do a group project. Class time will be set aside for group work. Preparation for assessments will also be done in the class. If your schedule does not allow you to attend this class regularly (I understand that students likely will need to miss 1 or 2 classes in the semester), then I strongly advise you to find a course that is a better fit for your schedule.

C. REQUIRED READINGS and TEXTS

All materials listed in the syllabus below must be read before class and are your responsibility. The course assumes students do the readings, even when those readings may not be specifically discussed (or discussed in length) during class time.

Readings are in ARES or otherwise available open-access, online. There is no required text. In previous years, I used the text below. There is one copy in the library, on reserve. To make it easier (and less expensive) for students, I have provided materials beyond this book and which will be available through ARES. Students who might prefer a printed text, may opt to buy this book. It is a useful resource, but not required.

- Michael Goodhart. 2023. *Human Rights: Theory and Practice*, 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press.

EVALUATION

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the Department and of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Department and the Dean.

Further information about each of these assessment types will be available on Brightspace.

		Due DATE	Marks
a.	In-class worksheets (1.5/week, best 7/9 for a max of 10.5)	Each week	10.5
b.	Post a biography of yourself: a picture of yourself, a brief introduction (where are you from; what are you	Sept 13 8:35	1

	studying; why are you taking this class; what keeps you passionate about life)		
c.	Post a photograph of a human rights issue that you see in your daily life with a short explanation (1 paragraph) of the connection between the photo and human rights as you see it	Sept 13, midnight	1.5
d.	Post a 2-paragraph review of an on-campus human rights event that you attend outside of class time	Before Nov 15	1
e.	Key human rights provisions and instruments	Oct 7, midnight	18
f.	In-class quiz	Nov 15	24
g.	Group Project	Nov 20	15
h.	Peer commentary on 2 group projects (2 marks each)	Nov 29	4
i.	Final (individual) paper	Dec 10 midnight	25
Total			100

**** All components must be successfully completed in order to get a passing grade**

Other assessment related instructions, including requests for extensions (in addition to those found on Brightspace):

- Assignments handed in more than 45 minutes past the due date will be marked late. Late assignments will be deducted 2 grades/day. Assignments more than three days late will be graded "0". Extensions will only be granted in extreme cases and with appropriate documentation. All late assignments will be put on the bottom of the marking pile. I cannot guarantee that late assignments will be marked prior to the end of term.
- If you require a short term extension, you must complete this form and send it to me: [Academic Consideration for Coursework form](#).
- Students requiring more than two of these extensions will be required to meet with me prior to any further extensions.
- **Extensions for longer than 7 days will normally not be granted.**

F. COMMUNICATING

I have regular office hours and am happy to chat with you during breaks/after class OR you can also make an appointment to see me (via Zoom) outside of class and office hours. I also respond to emails within a few days. BUT PLEASE NOTE: I do not look at email on the weekends or in the evenings.

G. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the Internet. Plagiarism is a serious offence. More information on the University's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT)
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Students may not submit **substantially the same piece of work (from this class or any other)** more than once for academic credit.

Use of generative AI tools to produce any content for this course is a violation of academic integrity standards, unless otherwise provided

Plagiarism is a serious offence. All cases where plagiarism or academic misconduct are suspected will automatically be referred to the Office of the Dean, Faculty of Public and Global Affairs.

More information on the University's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

PLEASE SEE end of course schedule for more information on: University and Departmental Policies on academic accommodations.

SCHEDULE AND READINGS (aka “Course Calendar”):

Please note the following dates:

- September 6** Our first class (term begins Wednesday 4 September)
- October 21 – 25** Fall Break – no class
- November 29 Last class
- December 6 End of semester

H. SCHEDULE and READINGS

	CONTENT	ASSIGNMENTS
Wk 1	<p>Sept 6 – Introductory class</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the course, discussion of objectives and assignments (first part of the class) Human rights and climate change https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zmSRQ3eMMa8 https://www.theguardian.com/usnews/article/2024/aug/09/texas-heat-prisons-lawsuit https://www.theguardian.com/usnews/article/2024/aug/13/workers-protections-heat-week https://www.saanichnews.com/news/extreme-heat-plaguesbc-migrant-farm-workers-ubc-study-shows-7495648 <p>READ: https://newsroom.carleton.ca/story/smartphones-in-classrooms-proscons/</p>	
Wk 2	<p>Sept 13 – Human rights and (slow) violence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Michael Goodhart, Introduction chapter, in <i>Human Rights: politics and practice</i>, Oxford UP, 3d ed., pp 1-7; Robert Nixon. 2011. <i>Slow Violence and the Environmentalism of the Poor</i>. Harvard UP, pp. 1-14 (up to sub heading “slow violence and strategies of ...”) 	<p>Assignment – photo – human rights image from your daily life</p>

Wk 3	<p>Sept 20- The cart before the horse: The challenges of addressing environmental harm through human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elena Cima. 2022. "The right to a healthy environment: Reconceptualizing human rights in the face of climate change", <i>Review of European, comparative, and international environmental law</i>, 31" 38-45 (up to section 4: Reconceptualizing human rights...); David Boyd, 2017, "Introduction" chapter in <i>The rights of nature: A legal revolution that could save the world</i>, pp xxi- xxxvi 	
<p>INTRODUCING "INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS LAW" AND SOME TEMPORALITIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS</p>		
Wk 4	<p>Sept 27: What are International Human Rights in practice? An introduction to International Human Rights machinery Origin stories of human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rhona K.M. Smith. 2016 "Human Rights in International Law" in Michael Goodhart human Rights: Politics and Practice, 3d edition, pp. 61-75 	In-class exercise this week that will be very helpful for your assignment
Wk 5	<p>Oct 4 NGOs and International human rights institutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ann Marie Clark. 2021. <i>Diplomacy of conscience: Amnesty International and changing human rights norms, Ch 1</i> "Amnesty International in International Politics", pp. 3-10 (up to the subsection "NGOs and the Emergence of Norms", p 10) 	Assignment work time in class
<p>October 7 midnight "International human rights machinery" assignment due; Brightspace</p>		
Wk 6	<p>Oct 11 – Imperialism and Human rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bonny Ibhawoh. "Seeking the political kingdom: Universal human rights and the Anti-colonial movement in Africa" in <i>Decolonization, self-determination, and the rights of global human rights politics</i> Dirk Moses, et al., eds. Cambridge university press, pp. 35 (to the top of) – 50; Angela Smith. 2021. "How neoliberalism embraced human rights: An interview with Jessica Whyte, in <i>Jacobin Magazine</i>, August 10, 2021, available at: https://jacobin.com/2021/10/neoliberalism-mont-pelerinsociety-hayek-mises-human-rights-discourse-marketpostcolonialism 	

Who is 'human' in human rights?	
Wk 7	<p>Oct 18 Women's rights are human rights; Sexuality and rights • Ganzfried, Miriam, <i>Amnesty International and Women's Rights: Feminist strategies, leadership commitment, and internal resistances</i>, Swiss National Science Foundation, 22., Ch. 2, pp.29- 43;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ted Talks – Wanjiku Thiong'o "Interconnecting climate crisis and gender-based violence" , https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cvXKn_BHWR8 <p>Recommended but not required:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For background: "The Atlantic slave trade: what too few textbooks told you – Anthony Hazard", ted-Ed., https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NXC4Q_4JVg • Amber Fletcher, "Gender inequality is showing up ... in climate change" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iPigdDzBDOE
Wk	Oct 25 NO CLASS – READING WEEK
Wk 8	<p>Nov 1 – Indigeneity and Human Rights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheryl Lightfoot "Indigenous mobilization and activism in the UN system", in Short, D., & Lennox, C. (Eds.). (2016). <i>Handbook of indigenous peoples' rights</i>. Taylor & Francis, pp. 253-267 • <i>Report of the Special Rapporteur on the implications for human rights of the environmentally sound management and disposal of hazardous substances and wastes</i>, submitted to Human Rights Council, 14 Sept – 2 October 2020 • Dr. Elaine MacDonald, "Environmental racism in Canada: What is it, what are the impacts, and what can we do about it?", blog, Sept 1, 2020, Ecojustice: https://ecojustice.ca/news/environmental-racism-in-canada/

Wk 9	<p>Nov 8 – Human Rights and the Environment</p> <p>Atapatuu, S. 2023. Ch. 14, “Human rights and the environment”, in M Goodhart. Ed., <i>Human Rights: Theory and Practice</i>, 4th ed., Oxford UP, pp. 297-319</p> <p>UN Human Rights Council, Resolution 48/13. https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2FHRC%2FRES%2F48%2F13&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False</p> <p>UN General Assembly, Resolution, “With 161 votes in favour...” Meetings coverage and press release, https://press.un.org/en/2022/ga12437.doc.htm</p> <p>The end of the beginning: General Assembly recognition of a right to a clean, health, and sustainable environment, https://www.universalrights.org/the-end-of-the-beginning-general-assembly-recognition-of-the-right-to-a-clean-healthy-and-sustainable-environment/</p>	
Wk 10	Nov 15 In class Quiz	
Wk 11	Nov 22 Group Presentations - TBC	
Wk 12	Nov 29 Group Presentations - TBC	

Useful Human Rights Websites (a sample):

The list below is partial (ie not comprehensive) and the organizations are all western based (which is a distinct limitation with this list). They are also, not coincidentally, well-resourced and hence tend to have good publications. This is just a starting place for you. There are MANY MANY excellent NGOs and civil society organizations in Asia, Latin and South America, continental Africa, and there are many that are thematically specialized. This list is just to get you started):

Amnesty International: <http://www.amnesty.org/>
 Action Aid: (<https://actionaid.org/>)
 Center for Economic and Social Rights (<http://www.cesr.org/>)
 Center for Constitutional Rights: <http://ccrjustice.org/>
 Center for International Environmental Law: <http://ciel.org/index.html>
 European Centre for Constitutional and Human Rights: <http://www.ecchr.de/>
 Human Rights Watch: <http://www.hrw.org/>
 ICJ judgments: <http://www.icj-cij.org/homepage/index.php?lang=en> International
 Centre for the Legal Protection of Human Rights (Interights):
<http://www.interights.org/home/index.html> Physicians
 for human rights (<https://phr.org/>)
 Anti-Slavery International (<https://www.antislavery.org/>)
 Global Witness (<https://www.globalwitness.org/en/>)
 International Federation for Human Rights (FIDHR): <https://www.fidh.org/en/> Open
 Society (<https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/>)

United Nations Documents: <http://www.un.org/depts/dhl/>
 United Nations General Assembly: <http://www.un.org/en/ga/>
 United Nations Human Rights Council:
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/HRCIndex.aspx>
 United Nations Security Council: <http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>

University and Departmental Policies:

STATEMENT ON STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

As a University student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>

Emergency Resources (on and off campus):

- <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

Carleton Resources:

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources:

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550,

<https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>

- Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows.

Pregnancy Obligation and Family-Status Related Accommodations

Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details about the accommodation policy, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities \(EIC\)](#) website.

Religious Obligation

Write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please go to: <https://carleton.ca/equity/focus/discrimination-harassment/religious-spiritual-observances/>.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. You can find the Paul Menton Centre online at: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>

If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or

support, visit: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>

Accommodation for Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. Read more here: <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>.

For more information on academic accommodation, please visit: <https://students.carleton.ca/services/accommodation/>.

Academic Consideration for Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances

Due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, students may occasionally be unable to fulfill the academic requirements of their course(s) in a timely manner. The University supports the academic development of students and aims to provide a fair environment for students to succeed academically. Medical and/or other extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are beyond a student's control, have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their academic obligations, and could not have reasonably been prevented.

Students must contact the instructor(s) as soon as possible, and normally no later than 24 hours after the submission deadline for course deliverables. If not satisfied with the instructor's decision, students can conduct an "informal appeal" to the Chair of the department within three (3) working days of an instructor's decision. We have created a webform specifically for appeals to the Chair, which can be found here: <https://carleton.ca/law/application-for-review-of-refusal-to-provide-academic-consideration/>. *Note: This form only applies to LAWS courses and is not the same as a formal appeal of grade.* More information about the academic consideration can be found [here](#).

University Grading system

Grade Point Equivalence Percentage Conversion

A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59

D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	less than 50

Fall 2024 Sessional Dates and University Closures	
<i>Please find a full list of important academic dates on the calendar website: https://calendar.carleton.ca/academicyear/</i>	
September 4, 2024	Fall term begins.
September 17, 2024	Last day for registration and course changes (including auditing) for fall, and fall/winter courses.
September 30, 2024	Last day to withdraw from fall term and fall/winter courses with a full fee adjustment (financial withdrawal).
October 14, 2024	Statutory holiday. University closed.
October 21-25, 2024	Fall break. No classes.
November 15, 2024	Last day for academic withdrawal from fall courses.
	Last day to request formal exam accommodations for fall, and fall/winter examinations to the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities.
November 22, 2024	Last day for summative tests or examinations or formative tests or examinations totaling more than 15% of the final grade in the fall or fall/winter before the official examination period.
December 6, 2024	Fall term ends.
	Last day of fall term classes.
	Classes follow a Monday schedule.
	Last day for take home examinations to be assigned.
December 7-8, 2024	No classes or examinations take place.
December 9-21, 2024	Final examinations in fall term courses and mid-term examinations in fall/winter courses will be held.
December 21, 2024	All final take-home examinations are due on this day, with the exception of those conforming to the examination regulations in the Academic Regulations of the University section of the Undergraduate Calendar/General Regulations of the Graduate Calendar.
December 24, 2024 – January 2, 2025	University closed.